



It was a gala gathering for Animal Rights Aruba on Saturday night

The second Animal Right Aruba (ARA) gala fundraiser was elegance personified as the black and white theme was the perfect excuse for ladies to force their men into wearing tuxedos. The women were beautifully gowned, having the opportunity to express themselves creatively in their garb, and the evening was a delight as those attending enjoyed a sumptuous meal and danced to the Venus Band.

The funds raised from Saturday night's event in the ballroom at the Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino will be used to finance a neutering campaign for dogs and cats, reducing the island's stray population. Bryan Stedeford, General Manager of the Stellaris Casino, which hosted the event and was the main sponsor, welcomed all and thanked those that had participated in making it a success. Roy Mesas, President of ARA also expressed gratitude and satisfaction in the over welcoming response not only from those that attended, but also that could not, but donated funds instead, and also made donations for the silent auction, which took up the first half of the evening, with attendees vying for some beautiful items donated by various companies. Jewelry, excursions, golf lessons, original art, even a dinner for eight made in one's own home prepared by the Marriott's executive chef, Robert Stautner, were up for grabs. The Marriott chain donated stays at over six of their resorts around the western hemisphere, as were two beautiful Thai Ridgeback puppies, complete with a starter gift basket and future appointments to be neutered by the Contraras Animal Center.

Those in the know credit Gina Heyligher, Marketing Supervisor of the Stellaris Casino, for being the driving force behind the event, assisted by Adolph and Ron, also of the casino. Donating goods and gift certificates for the auction were Marathon Video, Smit & Dorlas, Vela Windsurfing, Cigar Emporium, State of the Art, Sammy's Cigars, Jad Dive Shop, Advanced Dentistry, Aruba Resort & Spa, Renaissance Resort, The Jungle, The Radisson Resort, Royal Jewelers, Athena Couture, Sugarbird, Gimmick, Intermezzo Spa, Gandleman Jewelers, Shivas, Noble Jewelers, Jewels & Gems, Diamond's International, Boolchand's, Colombian Emeralds, Digicel, Rich's Car Wash, Dushi Bagels, Heineken, De Palm Tours, Coqui Pet Palace, Tranquilo Charters, Cliffix, Aruba Adventures, Shirley Barrow, SEAruba, Fly & Dive, T. H. Palm, Boardwal, Arion Wine, Kitesufing Aruba, and H.K. Tailors. The three artists donating their works were Anita v/d Sloot, Eefie Doorenbos and Lauren Eman. The silent auction raised an additional \$14,848 for the neutering program.

Over 350 attended the gala ball to show their support for Animal Rights Aruba and their work to humanly treat all animals in Aruba, but particularly stray cats and dogs. It is work that is close to the heart of many, and the very special appreciation we should all have for our loyal pets was evident in the humorous cartoons and pictures be flashed on the wall during the event. The overwhelming response by vendors and guests to this good cause was heartening to those who work hard to protect those that cannot protect themselves.